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THE TRANSITION FROM THREAT SITUATIONS
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20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)

A new orientation to pre-crisis study is developed drawing upon concepts from international systems analysis, empirical research on international crises and insights from cybernetics about monitoring change in a system. Conceptions of threat are divided into threat as behavior and threat as perception. Threat as behavior is determined by monitoring international event/interactions. Threat as perception is determined by the cognitive appraisals of international affairs analysts. Analyzing threat situations is viewed as a new criterion for anticipating international crises. A threat recognition model is proposed.

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THE TRANSITION FROM THREAT SITUATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CRISES

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In recounting how the Kennedy Administration formulated its policy toward the Cuban missile crisis, Stewart Alsop and Charles Bartlett (1962) ranked Secretary of State Dean Rusk's off-hand comment that "We're eyeball to eyeball, and I think the other fellow just blinked" as a classic in American diplomatic history. According to Alsop and Bartlett, the Secretary's observation captured the essence of the most explosive moment in the cold war. The momentum of Soviet-American interaction had so activated the "engines of war" that the superpowers were carried perilously close to the brink of nuclear disaster before one of the nuclear Titans stepped back. For their parts, both President John F. Kennedy and Premier Nikita Khrushchev seemed to recognize that if they acted hastily or without measured restraint an awful doom threatened the entire world,--indeed history itself.

The October crisis of 1962 was propelled by a pervasive force in human affairs,--namely a threat dynamic. The driving concern for prominent political leaders was the threat of an adverse future given present conditions or trends. Cues from the environment are interpreted to suggest that the situation anticipates a future condition of severe deprivation, more than likely involving some form of physical harm. The prevalence of negative signals heralding the advent of an unpropitious future stimulates systems to take action to avert the anticipated state of undesirability. The impending event precipitates the formation and implementation of tactics designed to steer the course of events away from the projected danger. President Kennedy read the presence of Soviet medium and intermediate-range ballistic missiles on Cuba as portending an adverse future that should, if at all possible, be avoided. He interpreted the situation as demanding strategies to neutralize, dissipate, or avert the prospects of such an unwanted condition.

In announcing his intention to impose a naval quarantine and demanding the removal of the missiles, Kennedy (1969) noted: "Should these offensive military preparations continue, thus increasing the threat to the hemisphere, further action will be justified. I have

directed the Armed Forces to prepare for all eventualities;
and I trust that, in the interest of both the Cuban people
and the Soviet technicians at the sites, the hazards to all
concerned of continuing this threat will be recognized." It
is obvious the President linked the presence of ballistic
missiles in Cuba with a future situation at odds with the
national security of the United States. The missiles augured
a future danger the United States Government deemed
unacceptable. On the basis of its appraisal of the
situation, the Administration took steps to eliminate such a
future. The overt action taken by the United States entailed
(1) seizing the political-diplomatic initiative by
announcing the discovery of the missiles, labelling them as
offensive and threatening to U.S. interests, and demanding
their removal, (2) imposing the naval quarantine, (3)
intimating a willingness to escalate the incident if Soviet
compliance was not forthcoming, (4) employing a veiled
threat of a surgical air strike against the launching sites,
(5) utilizing non-routinized channels of communication, e.g.
via the private exchange of letters between the heads of
state and special envoys such as Robert Kennedy, John Scali
and U Thant, and (6) issuing an ultimatum to insure removal
of the missiles. These maneuvers were actions taken to
dampen the prospects of an adverse future. They constitute
the overt behavior of national systems taken under the
stress of an anticipated danger.

The Cuban missile crisis illustrates, in the most
dramatic terms, the threat dynamic frequently at work in
international affairs, and most assuredly operative prior to
and during most international crises. This inquiry is
designed to monitor international political behavior to
determine if the system of action between nation-states
changes markedly from benign states of interaction to
malignant ones prior to an international crisis. The intent
is to explore whether international crises are preceded by
"threat situations." For present purposes, threat situations
are assumed to precede most international crises. The
research objective is to elicit a clearer understanding of
how international conflicts pass from the threat stage to
the crisis stage.

To meet this research objective, an investigation
strategy is employed which draws heavily upon the
theoretical advances in international system analysis made
during the last two decades, the empirical research on
international crises, and insights from cybernetics about
monitoring change in a system--in this case a threat system.
The strategy is guided by an interaction model of
international behavior elaborated on slightly to capture

changes in the states of the system of inter-state action.
The basic model is McClelland's event analysis model which
has already proven to be a robust strategy for monitoring
and   analyzing   high   politics   generally   (McClelland,
Tomlinson, Sherwin, Hill, Calhoun, Fenn & Martin, 1971) and
crises specifically (McClelland, 1961; 1962; Tanter, 1967;
1974; McCormick, 1973; 1975).

International event analysis takes the position that
regular behavior between national systems delineates the
character of the interaction system. Changes in the patterns
of   interaction   reflect   changes   in   the international
situation.   Consequently the analytic task is to monitor the
flow of events between national systems to identify both the
pattern of regularity in the event/interactions and its
change dynamic.   This information can then be used to index
the   various behavioral modes of the international action
system.   Here, international event analysis is used as a
strategy to identify the patterns of pre-crisis behavior, of
selected antagonistic states, to determine the regularities
in the behavior, the propensity to change, and the threat
content.

To increase the international event analysis model's
sensitivity to international threat situations, a cognitive
appraisal element is attache' to the basic event analysis
perspective.   The logic follows rather routinely from the
research on stress by Lazarus (1966), Withey (1962, 93-123;
1964) and others,--namely that threats arise by inferring,
or in the case of an issued threat being told, that present
conditions   or trends are intimately linked with some
impending disaster.   In effect,   threats and the behavior
associated with them, relate directly to the expectation of
harm, danger, adversity, and deprivation, sometime in the
future.   "The notion of threat specifically implies that the
noxious stimuli are not actually present. Only the cues
heralding their coming are involved" (Withey, 1962, 94). As
indicated by Withey, before a threat dynamic is operative,
the relationship between present conditions or trends and
future dangers must be recognized.   The expectation that
danger is approaching must be present before it is
reasonable to assume that the affected system is (1)
actually   threatened,   meaning   that   the approaching
confrontation is viewed with apprehension and preferably
should not be experienced (2) acting to avert, neutralize or
dissipate the possibility of an unwanted future.   The
cognitive appraisal dimension of this study serves as a
means for determining the presence of this expectation among
experienced observers of world affairs.

The union of international event analysis with the cognitive appraisal perspective combines the known advantages of each technique as a means of tracing and analyzing potentially dangerous sequences of inter-state behavior. Cognitive appraisal concepts give insights about which interaction sequences are perceived as alarming and foreboding by international political analysts within the national system. Meanwhile the international event analysis traces the behavior sequences that are generating that concern and apprehension. Furthermore, event analysis provides an impartial measure of the interaction behavior which is not viewed as threatening, but which results in unwanted consequences. In other words, it helps to recognize the cognitively unrecognized threat situation.

The end product sought using this strategy of investigation is a compilation of empirical findings describing how patterns of international conflict change and become international crises. he theoretical expectation is that the threat dynamic is a significant force propelling conflicts to their crisis levels. Guided by this expectation, the study attempts to delineate the behavioral characteristics most commonly associated with the transformation of a threat situation to a crisis situation. The result is an aggregation of empirical findings describing the "explosive mix" of factors most likely to lead to a crisis. Such information is indispensible to an understanding of how crises arise, how they can be detected at their earliest stage of development as well as how they can be managed.

The intellectual pre-occupation of this inquiry is to know more about the international interaction typically evoked when external events are either appraised as threatening, or are in fact stress-inducing, and disruptive. The basic theoretical orientation posits that national systems, indeed almost all open systems, are constantly confronted with external threat situations with which they must cope. An international crisis arises from the presence of such stimuli (Hermann, 1969a; 1972b, 3-17; 1972c, 187-211; Robinson, 1972, 20-35). In keeping with this orientation the most critical research question is:

1. What patterns of event/interaction characterize the pre-crisis behavior of antagonistic national systems?

Obviously the empirical objective of this question is to ferret out the regularities in the interaction sequences during the period prior to a crisis. Since the context,

issues, participants, location, duration, tempo, and role of intermediaries are highly variable items, the expected area of meaningful comparability across crises is the interaction patterns. As threatening events unfold, it is expected that national systems will adopt sequential strategies to nullify the approach of a negative future. The international event analysis model assumes that patterns of behavior can be identified for pre-crisis periods and distinguished from non-pre-crisis periods. Tanter (1972, 13) correctly asserts that McClelland's basic notion "is that events in conflicts might form a chain of interaction sequences, and the discovery of these sequences would permit comparisons across cases." But while this information is extremely important, the more demanding research task is embodied in the second research question which seeks to unearth the threat content of the pre-crisis interaction.

Considerable empirical evidence exists to support the commonly held belief that the threat of harm is worse than the actual experience of it (Cook & Barnes, 1964; Janis, 1951; Mechanic, 1962). This research emphasizes the distinction between the threat of harm and the actual confrontation with it. Behavioral responses in anticipation of an unwanted event are different from those responses undertaken in the face of the actual event. For example, President Kennedy was initially threatened by the prospect that the Soviets might introduce offensive weapons into Cuba. On September 4th and again on the 13th, Kennedy warned the Soviet Union that his administration would not tolerate such a move. These warnings probably served multiple functions--domestic and foreign, but they were undoubtedly intended to deter the Soviets from taking any unwise action. The threat dynamic precipitating Kennedy's sequential attempts to deter the Soviet Union was substantially changed after intelligence analysts studied the films of a single U-2 surveillance plane taken during an overflight on October 14. Now the President was confronted with the reality of the adverse future he had sought to deter. At that point the threat dynamic changed. The anticipated, unwanted condition was no longer the introduction of such weapons, but the concern that they would become operational. Of necessity, the coping strategy changed from deterring the Soviets to persuading them to "undo" what they had already done (George, Hall & Simons, 1971, 24).

2. What is the "threat content" of the interaction sequences between the antagonists during the pre-crisis period?

The "threat content" question is subdivided to account

for two fundamental elements of a threat situation: the perceptional and the behavioral.

2.a What interaction behavior leads to the perception of threat by political leaders and opinion elites in affected national systems?

2.b Are interaction patterns prior to an international crisis significantly different from "steady state" system of action which normally describes the pattern of behavior between national systems?

These questions highlight a distinction that should be made in threat recognition and analysis models. The distinction is between threat as an act, sequence of acts or a statement (an issued threat), and threat as perception. In the latter instance, threat is a perceptual variable. It is customary in recent psychological, disaster and international relations literature to view threat perception as a function of an opponent's destructive capability and the "perception of intent." Singer's (1958, 94) quasi-mathematical model is an excellent example; accordingly, threat perception is equal to the "estimated capability x estimated intent." A similar position is taken by associates of the Stanford Studies in International Conflict and Integration Project. The conceptual framework for the 1914 case (Holsti, 1965) and the Cuban missile crisis (Holsti, 1972) is a rather standard stimulus-response model where the perceptions of decision makers serve to mediate between the external stimuli and the decision making unit's response.

In the decision making framework adopted in the Stanford Studies, perceptions serve the very vital role of defining the situation (Snyder, Bruck & Sapin, 1962; Pruitt, 1965, 391-432; March & Simon, 1958). In an overall sense a perceptual component of any threat recognition research is analytically unavoidable. "Threat as perception" provides a necessary conceptual apparatus to explain a system's sequential accommodations to a series of events that are not particularly disturbing by objective standards, but are responded to as if they were. When the perception of threat is a causally determining behavioral factor, systems are expected to behave as though they were threatened despite the existence of evidence to the contrary.

"Threat as behavior" focuses on the stimulus events that cue harm or are harm producing. Through learning certain events, sequences or configuration of events are

associated with danger and adversity. The inference from these events to the idea that injury, even ruin, approaches is both reasonable and direct. The content of the events and/or the sequence of events has an "endangering" quality to them. They threaten the target system. They thwart its objectives, stifle its motives, impose pressure on its capabilities and impair, even hurt, its functions and structures. In international affairs, warnings, denials, accusations, demands, demonstrations and acts of force are inherently more threatening than agreements, consultations, negotiations or grants-in-aid. It is an almost banal observation that past experience determines what is threatening. Diplomatic history is replete with accounts describing how these events irritated ongoing systems of action, challenging the steady state and frequently inducing change in the behavioral patterns. There is a tendency for these events to produce threat situations,--that is disturbed behavioral settings of a highly explosive and lethal character.

Threat as perception and threat as behavior are distinct yet indispensible components of any threat recognition model. Both are fruitful concepts in determining when a threat situation exists and what the prospects of an international crisis are.

In social-psychological research, disaster studies, and international relations investigations, threat perception is a well explored concept. For many scholars of the behavioral persuasion, it was only reasonable to expect that the individual's perception of threat given selected environmental cues or personality traits would play a significant intervening role in determining how individuals behave in stressful situations. This is exactly Richard Lazarus' point (1966) in his argument that threat appraisal is the "intervening variable" in how individuals cope with psychological stress. Recent research by Alexander George and Ole Holsti (1975) demonstrates the centrality and utility of this perspective in international relations research dealing with how policy makers make decisions under the stress of a crisis.

In contrast to the threat as a perceptual variable, threat as behavior is a relatively unexplored concept. While it is true that deterrence and game theorists (Kahn, 1960; Snyder, 1961; Wohlstetter, 1959; Schelling, 1963) have elaborated extensively on the threat concept, their insights are restricted to a particularized sense of the term and are operative under rather special circumstances. There is little doubt that these insights have wider application in

International relations research, but to-date the task has not been performed. Similarly in the study of crises, both general and international, definitions of crisis frequently entail some threat element (Miller & Iscoe, 1963; Wiener & Kahn, 1962; 1972c), but this fact has not lead to a well developed notion of threat behavior.

The theoretical proposition adopted to expand the threat as behavior notion is that pre-crisis behavior will be characterized by marked changes from what is normal. Question 2.b seeks to determine whether significant differences exist between interaction sequences during the pre-crisis period and a known behavioral baseline. The baseline is an empirically generated measure of the "steady state" in the system of action between antagonists. A system is a set of entities "standing in interaction" (Von Bertalanffy, 1956, 3), and the state of the system refers to a particular pattern of interaction between the entities. A state is a "wholistic" notion and emerges as a signifigant unit of analysis is systems research. A steady state is one of many possible states of interaction for a system; for present purposes, it is the systemic condition of least disturbances and greatest constancy.

Theoretically the steady state is the system's stable region where the tendencies toward displacement and disturbance are countered by the forces of maintenance and stability (Berrien, 1968, 32). The steady state baseline serves as an unobtrusive, objective measure of the "normal operating" mode of the system. It is a state in an international system or subsystem where the volume of action is moderate, the conflictual forces are restrained and the cooperative elements balanced. The steady state represents the range of action least straining to the system. It persists so long as the variables, often called state variables, sustaining the stable condition are not forced out of the range of their stability. On this point, James G. Miller (1971, 294) argues:

> All living systems tend to maintain steady states (or homeostasis) of many variables, keeping an orderly balance among subsystems which process matter-energy or information. Not only are subsystems usually kept in equilibrium, but systems also ordinarily maintain steady states with their environments and suprasystems, which have outputs to the system and inputs from them. This prevents variations in the environment from destroying systems. The variables of living systems are constantly fluctuating, however. A

moderate   change   in   one   variable   may   produce
greater or lesser alterations in other related
ones.   These   alterations   may   or   may not be
reversible.

This systems   perspective   endorses   the definition of
threat content in question 2.b as a disturvance in the
steady state of behavior. Clearly, not all disturbances to a
steady   system   of   action   are   necessarily   threatening.
"Recognition   of   the   meaning   of   the information of ... a
threat must be based of previosly stored (usually learned)
information about such situations. A pattern of input
information is a threat when--like the odor of the hunter on
the wind; a change in the acidity of fluids around a cell; a
whirling cloud approaching the city-- it is capable of
eliciting   processes   which   can   counteract   the   stress ir
presages.   Processes--actions   or   communications --occur in
systems   only when a stress or a threat has created a strain
which   pushes   a   variable   beyond   its   range of stability"
(Miller, 1971, 294)

Systems   reasoning   in international relations suggests
that   crises   tend   to be associated with states of systemic
instability,--that   is   disturbances to the steady state. On
this point Oran Young has written that political fluidity
"frequently   evoke(s)   an   air of political expectancy which
creates   in   decision-makers   a psychological receptivity to
the   possibility   of   sharp   breaks   with the past. In this
context   crises   often   appear   as   short but intense
confrontations growing out of a merging in place and time of
the   disturbances   just   outlined" (1968,63) Crises are
preceded   and   attended by disturbances in the system; they
are   products   of,   as well as catalysts for, international
dislocations.   Under   extremly   fluid,   transitory political
conditions crises tend to develop. Young extends his line of
reasoning to the point of actually defining an international
crisis as "a set of rapidly unfolding events which raises
the   impact   of   destabilizing   forces   in   the   general
international   system or any of its subsysytem substantially
above 'normal'... and increases the likelihood of violence
occurring in the system" (1967,10) McClelland's position is
similar.   in   the   "Access to Berlin" study (1968), he bases
the analysis of the Blockade Crisis of June, 1948-May, 1949,
the Deadline Crisis of November 1958-May, 1959, and the
Berlin Wall Crisis of August 1961 on the premise that a
crisis can be distinguished from a non-crisis situation
because   the   crisis   is   a "change of state in the flow of
international   political   actions" (1968, 160) The change is
significant   enough   to   be   readily detected and reveals a
"sharp   break"   has   occurred in the prevailing pattern of

behavior in favor of a new pattern. Systems theory logic holds that the state-variables supporting the steady state system of action are significantly altered to the point that they dramatically rearrange the relationships between the interaction entities. Empirical evidence in international crisis research (McClelland, 1972, 90, 96; Zinnes, Zinnes & McClure, 1972, 140; Robinson, 1972, 25; Sigal, 1970, 133-149; Halperin and Tsou, 1966; Holsti, 1970; Lentner, 1972, 119; Jervis, 1970, 90-138; Janis, 1967;) is rich enough to sustain this basic argument and to warrant further research on more crises,--and especially the pre-crisis behavioral patterns.

The reason for tracking any sequence of events presumed to have some threat element associated with it is to know more about what combination of behavioral factors contributes to political explosions, and which do not. It is, therefore, not enough to describe the system of action, the perceived threat content or even how disturbed the system is from the normal range of behavior. Equally important is the task of defining what strategies national systems take to handle the stress generated by the advent of adversity. Consequently, the third area of focus for this inquiry is to determine the character of the adaptive behavior of national systems threatened with adversity.

Strategies of adaptation range from the simplest ways of dealing with minor problems to the most complex techniques for handling environmental change. Strategies vary from system to system. Lower forms of animal life rely heavily on instinctive, built-in mechanisms for handling stress, variety and change. Systems higher on the phylogenetic scale of development are increasingly dependent on learning as the source of inspiration in dealing with external stimuli. More advanced systems, human and human generated, frequently react more to the cues of danger rather than the danger itself. Through learning, advanced systems realize the disadvantages of attempting to deal with harm once it has actually occurred. Greater emphasis is placed on anticipating the harm, on reading environmental cues that project the likelihood of harm occurring. Cognition, interpretation, symbols and learning play critical roles in determining how complex systems adapt to adverse environmental events.

Exactly how systems strike compromises with their environments is an intriguing question and it might be added, a very serious business. Primate field studies have shown the importance of biosocial adaptation to threatening environments. Non-human primate studies reveal the primary

role of group in maximizing the chances for survival for
individual animals. Studies of the Old World monkey and
African apes suggest that at no time can individual animals,
living alone, handle the problems of the environment.
Complex social systems exist among non-human and humans to
facilitate adapting. Hall (1965) provides one of many
illustrations of the importance of the social system in
adjusting to the environment. Pata monkeys, Erythrocebus
patas, are physiologically built for speed which permits
them to adapt to life in the grasslands of Uganda away from
trees. When danger approaches a troop, the single, adult
male, attracts attention to himself by his bright colors,
jumping, screams and other techniques, and decoys the danger
away from the troop. The young, lacking the speed to escape,
and the females freeze in the tall grass and play "possum"
until the danger passes. Young animals practice decoy and
possum behavior in their play thereby learning the system
that contributes to their survival. The point is that speed
alone does not insure survival. The social structure of the
group (one adult male with several female and their young),
sleeping habits (troop members sleep separately), play
behavior, speed, even the tall grass which permits possum
behavior contribute to a successful adaptive behavior.

How national systems adapt to the international
environment is as intriguing and as serious as how pata
monkeys adjust to the Uganda grasslands. According to
Rosenau (1970, 365) environments are constantly changing
resulting in "a threat to the integrity and survival of the
organism." If national systems are to persist and grow, the
argument holds, foreign policies must be enacted to adapt to
the external environment. Adaptation depends on the
maintenance of essential structures (Rosenau, 1970; Kaplan,
1957; Ashby, 1952), on an internal and external homeostasis
or steady state (Ashby, 1952, 58-70; Cannon, 1939; Seyle,
1956; Smelser, 1963; Grinker & Speigel, 1945; Arnold, 1960),
on vital information processing (Miller, 1965; Hamburg &
Adams, 1967), and autonomy (Angyal, 1941, 49). Adaptive
behavior by national systems involves a diverse repertoire
of strategies to meet the variety of conditions in the
environment.

Adaptive behavior should be thought of as master
concept. It covers all types of behavioral compromises and
adjustme ts (French, Bodgers & Cobb, 1974, 316-333). The
primary concern of this inquiry is restricted, however, to a
type of adaptive behavior,--namely coping. Coping behavior
is a class of adaptation exhibited by systems when faced
with an acute disturbance or threatened with one. Coping
behavior occurs prior to and during highly stressful

situations. Stressful situations are those instances where environmental changes are sufficiently drastic to force the system to operate in a radically new environment. Crippling sicknesses, death of close relative, floods, storms, marriage, starting or graduating from school, exams, or business failure are all instances that elicit coping behavior from individuals (Dohrenwend, 1974, 275-310). Collectives such as national political systems are similarly challenged by floods, storms, epidemics, mass migrations, panics, riots, revolutions, wars and international crises. Coping behavior refers to those strategies employed by systems threatened with or confronted by drastic changes in the environment that defy familiar response patterns. It is adaptation under severe, short term, abnormal conditions. Coping is a temporary adjustment to an inflamed, or potentially explosive situation.

The third and final research question of this study is concerned with the problem of identifying how national systems cope with threat situations.

3. What coping strategies do national systems
   adopt to meet undefined, unstructured situations
   that threaten adverse future confrontations?

It is reasonable to expect that national systems will engage in coping behavior only if the situation is disquieting and depreciating, or appraised that way. Coping strategies are employed when management of a given situation exceeds the normal operating range of the system. New measures in greater amounts are tried to arrest a trend that is foreboding, unbearable and potentially ruinous.

The collective purpose of these research questions is to explore more thoroughly the pre-crisis behavior of national systems and to uncover the relationship between threat situations and international crises. Comparatively little is known about what types of behavior precipitate international crises, what sorts of acts are assessed as threatening by relevant publics, what kinds of behavioral patterns cause disturbances in a system of action, or what classes of activity constitute coping behavior. Knowledge about what determines whether an international crisis develops from a sequence of behavior rather than a mild episode or flare-up is virtually non-existent. Current behavioral explanations of international crises are unsatisfactory, scientifically speaking, because as yet no unique combination of interaction sequences is known to be associated with an international crisis as a unique outcome. This problem is certainly not peculiar to crisis research

(Evans, 1969; Smelser, 1963); nevertheless, it remains an impediment to accumulating a thorough knowledge of how threat situations evolve into crises. To reduce the disadvantages of this fact is a major goal of this undertaking.

"The aim of the sciences is to diminish uncertainty about the world" (Katz, 1974, 394). The aim here is to reduce some of the uncertainty surrounding how international interactions pass from relatively benign states to "acute" crises. It is assumed that a partial reduction of uncertainty can be achieved by monitoring the pre-crisis interaction of national systems to track the transition from the non-crisis to the crisis state.*

The problems of monitoring the evolution of a non-crisis situation to a crisis one are severe. McClelland (1961) reminds us of the classical diplomatic historian's view that a crisis is idiographic, and that the search for its pattern and regularity is a useless undertaking. No amount of nomothetic analysis can generate comprehensive generalizations when each case appears to be sui generis with respect to issue, actor, location, duration, tempo, role of third parties and superpower involvement. The general structure of pre-crisis and crisis situations is highly ambiguous; it never seems developed enough to evaluate, least of all manage. It is constantly changing and emerging. Crisis management and crisis preventive diplomacy must of necessity be context-dependent. They are contingent upon many unspecified variables which fluctuate over time (George & Smoke, 1974, 50, 54).

The problems of identifying similarities in particular cases are unquestionably sobering (Rosenau, 1968b; McGowan, 1975, 96). Verba (1967) acknowledges that generalizations tend to vanish in particular cases. Immensely complicated social processes frequently cloud the general dynamics at work in unique cases. The variety of crises selected for analysis do not constitute a sample of post-war crises, but they are sufficiently alike, meaning they are members of the same class of phenomena (Kalleberg, 1966), to warrant comparisons, to permit empirical probes (Eckstein, 1975), and to specify what similarities exist amidst the diversity (Robinson, 1972, 23).

*   For his Ph.D. dissertation, Richard S. Beal is monitoring
pre-crisis   interaction   activity among the nations involved
in   nine   post-World War II international crises: the Berlin
blockade   crisis   of 1948, the outbreak of the Korean War in
1950,   the   Taiwan   Straits   crisis   in   1955,   the   United
States-Lebanese   crisis   in   1958, the Bay of Pigs crisis in
1961,   the Berlin Aide-Memoire crisis in 1961, and the Cuban
missile crisis of 1962. Included in this monitoring activity
are   the   cognitive appraisals of national political leaders
and/or   prominent   opinion elites. The coupling of these two
enterprises follows the techniques described in this paper.

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